

**MINUTES
TOWN OF FORT MILL
UDO ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
January 28, 2015
The Spratt Building, 215 Main Street
7:00 PM**

Present: James Traynor, Ben Hudgins, Tony White, John Garver, Chris Wolfe, Hynek Lettang, Jim Thomas, Planning Director Joe Cronin, Assistant Planner Chris Pettit

Absent: Tom Petty, Louis Roman

Guests: James Shirey (Town Council), Paul LeBlanc (LSL Planning), Fredalyn Frasier (LSL Planning), Brown Simpson (Parks & Recreation Director)

Mr. Traynor, Chairman of the Fort Mill Planning Commission, called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

1. **Opening Comments:** Planning Director Cronin presented a Powerpoint presentation that outlined the history of zoning in Fort Mill. Planning Director Cronin stated that the town's zoning ordinance was first adopted in 1969, with major major revisions in 1983 and 1991. Planning Director Cronin added that a lot has happened since the last update nearly 25 years ago, include new state enabling legislation, two comprehensive plan updates, changes in case law and judicial precedent, changing economy and market demands, rapid growth and the associated demands placed on existing public infrastructure. Planning Director Cronin also added that the purpose of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) is to place all ordinances relating to the use and development of land in the town into a single, easy to use document.
2. **Introduction of Committee Members, Town Staff and Consultant Team:** Planning Director Cronin stated that the Advisory Committee would assist town staff, the consultant, and town council in reviewing and providing recommendations on the final draft of the UDO. The UDO Advisory Committee will be made up of the 7 members of the Planning Commission, as well as the chairmen of the Board of Zoning Appeals and the Historic Review Board. Planning Director Cronin and Assistant Planner will provide primary staff support for the project; however staff members from all departments will provide input and feedback throughout the process. Planning Director Cronin then introduced Paul LeBlanc and Fredalyn Frasier of LSL Planning, which was selected by town council in December to serve as the project consultant

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

1. **Project Scope, Approach and Timeline:** Paul LeBlanc of LSL Planning, the project consultant, introduced himself, his firm, and members of the project team. Mr. LeBlanc provided a Powerpoint presentation that outlined the difference between a comprehensive plan (community vision) and a UDO (implementation mechanism), the purpose of a UDO, the project scope and approach, and timeline for completion of the draft UDO document (12 months). Mr. LeBlanc outlined some additional goals of the UDO, including usability, flexibility, predictability, and meeting the needs and desires of the governing body, the development community, and existing residents and business owners.
2. **Goals and Objectives of the UDO:** Mr. LeBlanc opened the floor for comments and discussion. Specifically, Mr. LeBlanc posed three questions for the committee's consideration: What works well with the existing code; what needs to be changed; and what are the top development issues in the town? Chairman Traynor opened the floor for discussion:

Mr. Wolfe stated that the existing code is poorly organized and is hard for end users to use and reference. He added that although some developers may play local jurisdictions off of each other, he believes that Fort Mill is a hot location, developers want to be here, and we shouldn't fear overregulation if there are things that we feel need to be done for the betterment of the community. Mr. Wolfe also added that he is not opposed to higher density, or more compact "node" types of development, as long as there are offsetting increases in open space, green space and preservation requirements.

Mr. Traynor stated that it has been difficult for the Planning Commission to conduct the commercial appearance review process without defined standards and criteria.

Mr. Thomas stated that from his perspective on the Board of Zoning Appeals, it is difficult to apply new standards to older neighborhoods. In Whiteville Park, Paradise, and the mill village, for example, there are many homes with existing non-conformities, such as dual front yards, shared garages/accessory structures, non-conforming lot dimensions and setbacks, etc. The new code should be sensitive to issues in existing neighborhoods, and not provide a one size fits all approach.

Mr. Hudgins stated that he believes the greatest problem facing Fort Mill is the growing traffic issue. He recommended that the code include provisions designed to reduce traffic congestion and promote alternate modes of transportation, such as sidewalks.

Mr. Lettang stated that the ordinance needs to contain provisions that allow for the preservation of the unique qualities that draw people to Fort Mill, such as community character, landscapes, and the importance of community gateways.

Mr. LeBlanc thanked members for their feedback. He stated that these comments would be considered, along with those provided by planning staff and department directors earlier in the day. The next steps of the project will include meetings with a number of stakeholder groups, a thorough review of existing development-related ordinances, and the preparation

of a draft outline for the UDO. Staff will notify the UDO Advisory Committee of future meeting dates.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:42 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe Cronin
Planning Director